

~~Box IV~~, 97.E. Box. 0064 ~~Box 10: 126a~~

INSTRUCTION IN ART

IN
FOREIGN SCHOOLS.



*Extracted from the Report of W. Dyce, Esq., R.A., on Foreign
Schools of Design, made in 1839.*

THE SCHOOL OF LYONS.

The School of St. Peter, at Lyons, was founded about the middle of the last century, expressly for the instruction of draftsmen engaged in preparing patterns for the silk manufacture of that city. It was at first on a very small scale, but its operations were attended with much more benefit than those of the *Ecole Gratuite*, of Paris (which originated about the same period) seem to have been. It continued in its original condition till the Revolution of 1789, when, with the other institutions of France, it was completely disorganized. By a decree of Napoleon (25 Germinal, An XIII.) it was restored, but on a different footing. It now became a school or academy of fine art, to which, as a subordinate branch, the study of design for silk manufacture was attached.

France.

It appears that, on this account, all the students who enter the school commence as if they intended to become artists in the higher sense of the word, and it is not till they have completed their exercises in the drawing and painting of the figure from the antique and the living model, that they are called upon to decide whether their future pursuits shall tend towards design for industry, or the production of works of fine art. This circumstance, among others, to which I shall have reason afterwards to allude, will account for the well-known fact that the same individuals in France are frequently engaged in both pursuits.

On a review of the method of instruction adopted in the school of Lyons, so far as it is connected with manufacture, it appears to me to exhibit the true principle on which a school of design ought to be constituted, whether it confine itself to one branch of industry, or extend its operations over the whole field of ornamented manufacture. By the account I have given of it, the instruction will be observed to be twofold; one part relating to the general study of art, and the other to the process of manufacture to which art is to be applied; the latter naturally giving rise to what constitutes the ultimate purpose of the school; viz. the practice of the particular species of design which is adapted to the reproductive capabilities of the fabric.

Thus it will be seen that the elements of the education of an industrial artist, which in the German system are divided among two or three separate schools, are here to be found united in one; that is to say, the relation of ornamental design to taste, and the principles of fine art, and its practical relation to manufacture, equally form the business of the school of Lyons.

With respect to the elementary section of the studies, the circumstance that the drawing of the human figure is made its basis, proceeds, as I have already hinted, more from convenience, habit, and the accident of the association of the school of the fine arts and the school of design for manufacture, than from any idea that study of that kind is practically available in the preparation of patterns for silk. The human figure, it is true, was taught in the school before its elevation to the rank of a Royal Academy, but not to the same extent; like the "*Ecole Gratuite*" of Paris, which retains its original constitution, ornament, flowers, and other materials more applicable to the bulk of manufactures, held an equal place in the elementary exercises of the scholars.

It is only, however, in consideration of the specific object of the school of Lyons, that I am disposed to question the propriety of obliging all the pupils to learn the grammar of the art by so difficult a means as the figure, since it

[Price 1d.]

A

1

Study of
the human
figure.

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

France. cannot, for ordinary commercial purposes, become matter of ornament in silk manufacture.*

The human form, as a means of study, and the human figure, employed as ornament, are not identical; and though in proportion as an artist has laid a foundation in a higher kind, he may, with less application, become expert in the practice of an inferior: yet it must be remembered that a power of designing the figure as consummate as that of a Michael Angelo, *does not in the very smallest degree imply the capability of producing a useful pattern for fabrics of the loom.* Any one practically acquainted with the subject must know that the designer for goods of this kind has resources, rules, and methods of execution, which require all the time he has to spare to become conversant with, and that in his after practice, fettered as he must be with considerations of expense, of fashion, and such like, he will rather regret than feel gratified with the possession of a mere accomplishment which he is able to turn to no useful purpose.

But the case is quite different if a school has a general and unlimited reference to manufacture. In a school of this kind, it appears to me that the opportunities it affords for the practical study of art must strictly correspond with the uses to which it is subsequently to be applied. If the pupil intends to become a designer or fabricator of small bronze works for pendules, &c., or a carver in wood, or a silver chaser, or a house decorator, unless the human figure or figures of animals are to be banished from such branches of industry, these must become the object of his studies. It is utterly preposterous to deny to artisans the full means of study necessary for the skilful exercise of their several crafts from any fear of their becoming artists; because if they do so, and are successful, it will not be a matter of accusation against a school of design, that it first afforded them the means of acquiring celebrity. In France, when this takes place, so far from being looked upon as an evil, it is considered to be creditable to the school; in proof of which, I need only quote the address made to the Minister of the Interior by M. Belloc,† director of the Ecole Gratuite of Paris, at the annual distribution of the prizes in 1837, in which he recounts with pride the names of the pupils who, having commenced their studies under his superintendence, were afterwards transferred to the "Ecole Royale des Beaux Arts," where they had gained prizes in several departments of fine art.

I do not, I confess, see anything to fear on this ground. Of the 2,000 works of art annually exhibited at the Louvre, at least a fourth part is the production of artists who, though engaged through the year in the preparation of patterns for manufacture, gratify their taste, or (it may be) their vanity, by executing during their leisure hours some picture or statue for the exhibition. In England the employment of an industrial artist as a recognized and lucrative profession can hardly as yet be said to exist; and, were this once created through the agency of schools of design, it would prove a sufficient remedy for any misdirection of the student's acquirements. The profits of a designer for industry in France are greater than those of a second-rate artist. This is well known; and it acts as a safeguard against the ambition of becoming an artist, which, under similar circumstances, would operate even more strongly in England than it does in France.

But I am persuaded that the want of opportunity for the study of the figure, is the very cause of the evil which is so much dreaded. Were the capability of drawing the human figure as common as that of reading or writing (which in France it may be said to be), we should, no more than the French do, think of identifying the former with the genius necessary for the practice of fine art than we should suppose the latter must inevitably lead to deluge the world with poetry.

Take the case as it now stands in England:—A young artisan of the better class engaged in an occupation which requires some knowledge of art, and possessing natural talent, is desirous of drawing the figure. Let us suppose him

* I say for ordinary commercial uses, because the French *metteurs en carte* and weavers are extremely fond of displaying their skill by producing for the exhibitions, copies of pictures, &c. There was lately executed by the Jacquard machine a copy of one of the pictures in the Musée de Lyons, which must have required an artistical power and an acquaintance with the capabilities of the loom, of which manufacturers in this country have no conception.

† Himself a painter of History.

for this purpose at work in the British Museum, or, if he is able to afford it, at some private school: now who are his associates in study? Why, young artists, without exception. The result of this may be easily foreseen. Having no one to explain to him the bearing of the study he is engaged in on his industrial occupation, and being constantly associated with those whose purpose is the pursuit of fine art, he gradually falls into their habits of thought, becomes inoculated with their desire of fame, is disgusted with his humbler craft, and in the end, perhaps overrating his talent, forsakes a certain subsistence for one always precarious, and to inferior ability most hopeless.

Had this artisan during the progress of his studies been made fully aware of the amount of excellent art which might be infused into the productions of the branch of industry in which he was engaged;—had he been shown that the same principles of beauty which guide the professors of fine art in their works, were also required in his own, he would have been convinced that he had ample scope for the indulgence of his fancy or his skill, without resorting to any means of displaying them more difficult than those to acquire which he had already undergone an apprenticeship. It is evident too, from the history of ancient industrial artists, that there may be an enthusiasm quite as absorbing in the execution of works of ornament, and a reputation as lasting as there is in the creation of the higher productions of fancy; and these two circumstances, I take it, would be very influential with young men likely to indulge in the ambition of becoming artists.

The class of "La Mise en Carte" in the school of Lyons, though intentionally most complete, is not considered to be so efficient as it might be. It is said that the pupils who have terminated their studies, instead of being finished designers, perfectly acquainted with the various practical improvements in the fabric and the fluctuations of taste which have taken place up to the time when they leave the school, and consequently ready to enter into the service of manufacturers, are obliged to undergo a long noviciate in the "atelier" of some artist in full employment before their abilities can be turned to any account. This defect is supposed to arise from the circumstance that the professor who was formerly a silk manufacturer, has ceased to maintain his practical acquaintance with the actual state of industry in Lyons; and that his instructions referring rather to the silk manufacture of ten years back, than to that of the present day, the students leave the school unacquainted with many of the most important improvements in the working of the Jacquard machine which have recently been introduced. I give this, however, as an opinion current in Lyons, the justice of which I had no means of verifying. If such be the fact, the blame is not due to the intention or constitution of the school, for there is an express provision in the laws relating to the deposit of patterns at the "bureau" of the "Conseil des Prud'hommes" (Art. 18, March 18, 1806), by which the patterns of silk, after the expiry of the time for which the protection has been granted, become the property of the school, to enable the professor to exhibit historically to the students the progress of the manufacture both as respects taste or fashion, and fabric.

But there are other causes besides the excellence of the system of tuition in the school of Lyons, which have their share in maintaining the great superiority of taste in the silk manufacture of that place.

Dr. Bowring has stated* that the silk trade of Lyons is one of orders. This is strictly true; and the Lyonnese manufacturer, accordingly, looking on the execution of a piece of silk after he has received the order for it, as a matter purely mechanical, which requires only a certain expenditure of labour, time, and material, bestows all his care and attention on the pattern; because it is on the quality of this that his success in the market depends.

Nothing, in fact, is more difficult than to pronounce with certainty what the merits of a design drawn on paper may be when it comes to be worked on silk; on this point the most practised draftsman is always doubtful. The French manufacturer is well aware of this; he is quite sure that if his designer be uncertain, much more is his employer in the trade likely to be so: he adopts, therefore, the safe expedient of sending into the market his patterns already woven in silk; and this he finds to be advantageous in two ways. When the

"La Mise en Carte."

Designs on paper not necessarily successful when worked.

* Report on Commercial Relations, Silks, and Wines.

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

France. French patterns thus prepared, and the patterns of the English manufacturer, which are only drawn on paper, are presented at the same season to the English dealer, the preference, if any doubts or uncertainty occur, is naturally given to the former. But besides this, the French manufacturer is really able, by the employment of looms solely in pattern weaving, to bring his patterns to greater perfection.

Very generally the defects of a pattern for silk become apparent *only* in the working. When they occur, the Lyonnese pattern weaver has no reason for hesitating to make the necessary change, because he is paid for doing so; and the designer is always at hand to show him where the defect lies, and how it may be most easily remedied. The English manufacturer, on the other hand, perhaps to avoid the risk of a dispute about a change of pattern,—perhaps though aware of some defect, because he is unable to discover where it lies, and from habit, has no confidence in the taste or advice of his draftsman,—is obliged to allow the piece to be produced in large quantity, and thus has an inferior article thrown on his own hands, or on those of his employer in the trade.

In Lyons there is no chance of this. The business of the pattern designer and *metteur en carte*, (always the same person,) does not cease with the mere production of a drawing on paper; he also superintends its being set up and worked in the loom; and thus he is enabled to correct, to retouch (if I may be allowed the expression), and to finish his design. So complete is the co-operation between the designer and the pattern-weaver, that both may be said to be engaged about one object; the latter being an instrument in the hands of the former to accomplish a work of art, towards the production of which the labours of the designer really tend, namely, a pattern wrought in silk and not one sketched on paper.*

Industrial
artists in
France.

There is no circumstance, indeed, in France connected with the application of design, not merely to the silk manufacture but to every branch of industry, that deserves more special notice than the high estimation in which industrial artists are held, and the free and unrestrained exercise of their judgment and taste which is consequently allowed to them in all matters over which their peculiar abilities ought properly to give them control. So entire is the confidence which the Lyonnese manufacturer reposes in his designer, that I have been assured by the head of one of the principal houses there, that in many cases he did not see the patterns till they were produced in silk, being quite satisfied that in every matter where taste was concerned the artist must know better than he. In short, a French pattern designer is looked upon in his sphere precisely in the same light as a professor of fine art. You may employ him or not as you think fit, but having given a commission, it is he, not you, who is responsible for the merits of his performance; and this, as I have stated, does not terminate in the design merely,—his taste and judgment must be equally allowed to control the manner and process of reproduction.

Those who are not much conversant with the very different state of matters in this respect at home, may think I attach too much importance to the authority which is accorded to French pattern draftsmen by manufacturers, but a very little consideration will be sufficient to make this appear in another light. For myself, I am quite persuaded that if there is one cause more powerful than another which has contributed to retard, or which now presents an obstacle to the progress of taste in British manufacture, it is the degraded position which pattern designers occupy,—a position in which their talents find no scope for development, and their taste and judgment as artists are set at naught.

It may appear incredible, but I assert it without fear of contradiction, that there are very few if any instances in Great Britain, of industrial artists who are employed as responsible persons; that is, to whose judgment manufacturers give the least deference; whose productions can be looked upon as original works; or who are allowed even to have a voice as to the mode in which the

* Dr. Bowring has stated (1834) that half the Lyonnese weavers live in the vicinity of the town, and that the number of those residing in Lyons has been gradually decreasing. I understand that at the present time, those only remain who are engaged in pattern weaving, and the weaving of the richer kinds of figured stuffs; and that this arrangement, by which the operatives are scattered over a considerable tract, has been promoted by manufacturers, who have found it beneficial in preventing the combinations which used formerly to be so seriously inconvenient and detrimental.

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

patterns they are employed to make should be executed. This state of things, it is true, in the first instance, originated in the deficiencies of designers themselves, and their inability to cope with the skill of continental artists; but the position they have lost cannot now be regained solely by the acquisition of any degree of excellence, since the expedients universally resorted to by manufacturers have done away the very necessity of other than mere draftsmen and copyists. As the case now stands, the manufacturer takes upon himself the onus of finding the pattern, and this is every way attended with detriment to the interests of commerce. I do not suppose I am guilty of any libel on the character of a most valuable and important branch of the community, when I say that, generally speaking, manufacturers are practically unacquainted with art, for the same may be affirmed without offence of the majority of the members of other professions; but if this be the case, and they have taken upon themselves a responsibility, which from their education, their occupations, or perhaps their natural powers of judgment in matters of taste, it is impossible they should be competent to discharge, we shall find no difficulty in discovering the source of the short-sighted expedients by which each has endeavoured to outstep the other in the race after commercial novelties.

France.

The mechanical business of copying, altering, or dove-tailing patterns, already in some shape in the British or foreign market, (which is all that a draftsman is now called upon to do,) is neither lucrative, nor does it hold out the very smallest prospect of that kind of reputation and applause which French designers individually enjoy, and which every one knows is the most powerful motive for exertion with young artists; the consequence is, that if a youth of natural ability thinks he has any prospect whatever of succeeding in the higher walks of art, he will rather take his chance in this than submit to the thankless drudgery to which he is exposed as a pattern draftsman. If this is not true, how comes it that we have no instances of men of high artistical powers devoting themselves to design for industry? That such is the case in France every one is aware; and why is it so? Because, not only is the estimation in which they are held and deference which is paid to their opinion always proportioned to their skill and abilities, but the remuneration is such as to ensure them a respectable position in society.

In Lyons, the commercial value of taste is reckoned so high, that when a young man displays remarkable powers, a house will admit him to a partnership, in order completely to monopolize his services. Even in general employment, a Lyonnese pattern designer in good practice, realizes as much as 10,000*fr.* per annum; which, considering the comparative value of money in Lyons and any town in England, must be reckoned a sum much beyond the conceptions of remuneration on the part of English manufacturers. But why is this? For this obvious reason; the French manufacturer incurs little or no expense for the purchase of foreign designs; he does not employ agents to obtain *per fas et nefas*, a pattern of every new article that appears in the London or Paris market; he never suffers the loss (so frequent in this country) arising from his having manufactured the same pirated design simultaneously with three or four other houses; and therefore it is that he can afford to pay his artist highly. Though the sum he thus expends may appear large, the outlay on patterns in France is not greater than it is in England, if indeed it be so great. But the difference is this, that the money which in France is paid directly to the artist, is in England frittered away on expedients for superseding the employment of original designers;—expedients which, if law and honesty are to be taken into account, cannot be reckoned other than illegitimate, and which, in prudence, must, I fear, be thought very short-sighted, because the great bulk of patterns executed in England according to the present system, must inevitably want the stamp of novelty and originality, which is not only the great characteristic of the French, but is really the advantage which the French manufacturer gains by paying liberally for the assistance and judgment of highly educated artists.

Another evil arising from the present system, is the want of artistical taste in the execution of fabrics, especially of the coloured kinds. It is the common practice to ring the changes (if I may use the expression) on a pattern, by varying the arrangement and quality of the colours. I need not say that to do this in a tasteful manner, the judgment of an artist is absolutely necessary. Now, unfortunately, this is never (so far as I have been able to learn) put in

Want of
artistical
taste in
colours.

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

France.

Paper-hangings.

requisition. Nominally, it belongs to the manufacturer to direct the variations of colour and effect, but virtually it is left to ignorant workmen, who having a certain established mode of proceeding, put it in practice in every case, whether in respect of taste it be right or wrong.

A few years ago, a French manufacturer of paper-hangings came to this country, with the intention of commencing business. To ensure his success he brought with him a skilful designer of patterns for paper, believing that with the advantages he should enjoy in other respects, he had only to superadd the quality of excellent design, (in which English papers are lamentably deficient,) to drive all competitors out of the market. He engaged English workmen, and commenced his operations. His designer, accustomed to the French method, was of course not content with having merely furnished the pattern; he considered that half of his vocation consisted in seeing that no injury was done to the character of his designs through the unskilfulness of the workmen; with this view, he insisted that the tints employed should exactly correspond to those in his design; and that if the colouring were to be changed, the alteration should be according to his judgment. Could anything be more reasonable? But what was the result? The workmen struck work; they had been accustomed to make up their tints in large quantities; they had but three greens, or two reds, or two yellows, and so on; there were only certain changes in the arrangement of the colours which they were in the habit of making, and it was absurd to suppose that they should submit to the caprice of a Frenchman, who seemed to think there were as many colours as days in the year, and who insisted upon many minute variations of tint of which they could see no use, and which were not employed in the trade. The concern was accordingly broken up.

I have mentioned this little history (which is purely matter of fact), not only because it completely marks the difference between the French and the English system of *mise en fabrique*, but because the comparative results which might be expected from the difference are so fully borne out by the actual state, in the two countries, of the branch of industry to which it relates. Half a century ago, I am informed, France was supplied to a large amount with paper-hanging, manufactured in England; and the names of the artists who at that period gave to it its high character, have even been preserved. At the present time, by reference to the French Custom-house returns, it appears that the importation has dwindled down to almost nothing (Ret. 1836-7, 14 kilogr.); while a visit to the shops of any of the English dealers in the metropolis, will prove to what extent England is indebted to France for whatever is novel or tasteful in that branch of industry.

On the other hand, if the French manufacturer defers to the judgment of the artists where taste is concerned, the latter is indebted to the former for information as to the direction which his taste and powers of invention must take to become of commercial benefit. Design for industry is not an abstract thing; it is not the business of the designer to produce good patterns for any possible condition of manufacture, but, taking it as he finds it, to bring his cultivated taste to bear on its improvement. It is the fashion of each succeeding season that he has to deal with. The practice of French manufacturers in this respect seems to me worthy of being noticed. It is, I believe, considered by them, that fashion is something more than the mere caprice of the moment; and, though individuals of rank or of celebrity of some kind may for a time give a particular bias to the *mode*, yet that the current of taste in the ordinary matters of life has its origin, and takes its direction from the general character and habits of society. Hence they say, if we refer to the history of any past age, we shall find the records of its literature and its art, and the remains of its every day appliances of life, all partaking of some common character of sentiment. Acting on this notion, the manufacturers of France make it their business to discern accurately the characteristics of the under current of feeling to which fashion and its changes are supposed to be due; and by this means to keep pace with people's inclinations, and even to anticipate them. "We know," said one of the Lyonnese manufacturers to me, "that when the fashion of this year shall have run its course, every one will have a longing for something new; yet not absolutely new, but something to which the present mode naturally tends. That something, which in the world of fashion is only an

French manufacturers defer to the judgment of the artist.

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

indefinite sentiment, in fact, a mere predisposition, we endeavour to render palpable, to give it a strongly pronounced character, and assign it a name. Therefore it is that with us fashion is so paramount; the objects of industry presented at the commencement of a season exactly chime with and anticipate the predispositions of society."

However this be brought about, whether by an understanding among the heads of the several branches of industry, or by force of tact in individual manufactures, I am not able to say; but certainly the consistency and uniformity of fashion or style in all the productions of a Paris season are very remarkable; and it cannot be affirmed, that they are due either to experiment or to foreign influence.

France.

THE GEWERB INSTITUT, AT BERLIN.

The paramount object of the Institute is the creation of a race of intelligent and highly-cultivated artisans, to whose influence on the manufactures of the districts to which they belong, the Government looks for the special benefits which are proposed by schools of more limited purpose. On this account, whatever may have been the occupation of the pupil previously to his entering the school, no reference is made in the course of the instructions, either to that, or to his future purposes. If, however, during the progress of his studies, he displays remarkable scientific or artistical talent, he is transferred, as the case may be, to the University, to the Royal Academy, or to the Bau-Schule.

Prussia.

The young men who obtain admission to the Gewerb Institut, have generally been recommended on account of their having, in the elementary schools, shown some promise of ability; and the full development of this, whatever it may be, not by partial means, but by an admirable and extended system of education, is the great purpose of the Institute.

Admission.

So far as taste is concerned, it was hoped that, by constituting the study of the principles of design and construction a part of the course side by side with mechanics, chemistry, and other branches of physical science, the character of the pupils would be elevated in that respect in a degree suited to their other acquirements; and that whatever improvement took place in their scientific and practical knowledge, would also in the refinement of their tastes; and, accordingly, that the appreciation of art, and its right application wherever it was desirable, would be the inevitable result. Such has been the case. It is hardly necessary to say that these highly-instructed artisans seldom return to their native provinces as mere workmen; their knowledge and acquirements make them invaluable to manufacturers, as overseers and directors of their establishments; and thus, though the Gewerb Institut does not profess specially to instruct designers for manufacture, it happens ultimately in very many cases that its pupils either personally conduct, or at least have the superintendence of, that branch of art. And apparently nothing can be more admirable than the preparation which is given in the school, for an occupation of that sort. In the second class of the school (which is the elementary one), the pupils are taught geometrical, architectural, and free-hand* drawing. They then have a course of mathematics and the elements of physics; after which they study machinery and the practical operations of manufacture. In this stage of their progress they learn, from working models and the demonstrations of the professor, every requisite of the design intended for a particular manufacture. They are taught, for instance, in the case of figured silk, how to transfer a design to the ruled paper; how to read it off and pierce the cards; how to choose the silk which will produce the proposed effect, and lastly to set it up and work it in the loom. Or in the case of calico printing, they are shown the various operations of block and cylinder printing, and the effects and combinations of colour which are possible in that process of industry.

Instruction in processes.

It is obvious that preparatory study such as this might, if it were allowed to produce its full effect, leave comparatively little for the pupil to acquire in the practice of industrial design.

In the cultivation of art in the Gewerb Institut, there is no limitation as to the objects of study which are placed before the pupils. So far as the materials

* Frei-hand-zeichnen, in opposition to rule and compass drawing.

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

Prussia. go, they are, as I have hinted, precisely of the same nature as those made use of in academies of fine art. They consist of casts from antique statues, casts of animals from the antique and from nature; casts, drawings, and engravings, of ornament from the antique, and from nature; casts, drawings, and engravings and drawings of plants and flowers from nature. The school also at one time possessed a life academy; but this was discontinued as an unnecessary expense; and the students now have the privilege of attending the school of the living model at the Royal Academy, when the masters deem them fit for it. All the pupils, however, after the preparatory exercises in architectural and other ornaments, go through a course of study of the human figure.

A reference to the plan of instruction will at once show why the Gewerb Institut does not fully operate as a school of design. By the time the student has reached the highest class (1 class, 1 division), his exercises in design have altogether ceased; and this arrangement is, I believe, expressly intended to signify that the study of art in this institution is looked upon only as a matter of general education. If a pupil, therefore, is desirous of becoming an artist, in any sense, he must look to the Royal Academy as the source of the knowledge and skill necessary in that profession.

Thus in theory the joint efforts of these two establishments are required to complete the education of a designer for manufacture; because his occupation is supposed to hold a middle rank between that of the mere workman and the professor of fine art: in the one he is taught to look upon art solely in its reproductive or commercial aspect; in the other, in its relation to taste and right principles; and accordingly, to a certain extent, we find similar departments of study in both institutions. Before the foundation of the Gewerb Institut (about 12 years ago) the Royal Academy possessed *ateliers* for the practice of several branches of industry connected with the arts of design; and though, for convenience sake, the manipulatory part of these classes is now almost confined to the former, the old departments of study still remain.

This fact is, I think, an important evidence of the views (just views, as I consider them) which existed in old academies before the establishment of schools of design was thought of; and I may be permitted here to allude to a circumstance which has not been noticed, that the same opinion of the practical and necessary connexion of fine art and industrial seems, by an expression of Sir Joshua Reynolds, in his address on the opening of the Royal Academy of London, to have been entertained in this country at that time. The classes in the Royal Academy of Berlin, referred to, are:—

1. A class of carving in wood, and wood-cutting.
2. A class of all kinds of engraving.
3. A class of ornamental letter and card-cutting.
4. A class of metal working.

Besides these there are, for the general education of ornamentists:—

1. A school of drawing and modelling of the human figure.
2. Ditto ditto of animals.
3. A class of landscape and botanical drawing.
4. A class of general decorative design.

In practice, this association of the Academy and the Gewerb Institut, in the rearing of designers for manufacture, is inconvenient, and perhaps intended to be impracticable. Every student of the latter is obliged, as I have said, to go through the whole course, which occupies three years; and this long period is a sacrifice of time which, to a young artist, would not be counterbalanced by the general advantages of the institution in other respects. Besides, if he had merely in view the practice of design, admission to the school would most probably be denied to him. But more than this: the Gewerb Institut, looking solely to the mere manufacture, uses the study of design as a means of elevating the tastes of artisans, without reference to the pursuit of art as a profession; the Royal Academy, on the other hand, professes to do no more than impart the right principles and general practice of decorative art; and thus the designer (to use a homely expression) slips down between two stools; he is left to acquire, as he best may, what after all constitutes the real difficulty of his profession,—the power of producing tasteful patterns adapted to the existing state of industry. I think we may find a recognition of this defect in the system in the fact, that a

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

Sunday school, held in one of the apartments of the Gewerb Institut, has lately been opened for pattern drawing, chiefly with reference to damask, figured silk, and carpet weaving. This, however, has not removed the difficulty; because it appears that the students of the Gewerb Institut are not allowed to attend the Sunday school, nor *vice versa*; and its provisions for imparting knowledge, either of art or manufacture, are as yet too incomplete to supply the place of the Gewerb Institut to those to whom the latter is inaccessible.

Prussia.

The pupils attending the Sunday school are mostly sons and apprentices of weavers, whose object is to acquire the power of preparing the designs of others for the loom, by transferring them to the ruled paper. There were only five pupils at this school when I visited it.

The studies of the Gewerb Institut are conducted by ten, and sometimes a greater number of professors and teachers. They are paid by the lesson the sum of one thaler (3s.), each lesson lasting an hour; when the lesson is more in the nature of a lecture, requiring previous preparation, the payment is extended to 1½ thaler per hour. The masters are not engaged for life, but may be dismissed on a notice of six months.

Professors.

The institution is under the sanction of the Minister of Commerce, by whom a director is appointed. The present accomplished director, M. Beuth, being himself in the ministry (in the department of manufactures), receives no salary, and is obliged to no periodical attendance, or practical interference in the conduct of the studies. He has the appointment of the masters, and absolute control over their operations.

Prizes, consisting of copper and silver medals, are periodically awarded to the most deserving pupils, who, also, at the termination of their studies, receive recommendations from the director to the heads of various branches of industry in which they have shown capability; and a young man, thus recommended, is sure to obtain immediate employment.

Prizes.

Exhibitions of specimens of manufacture are held from time to time in Berlin. The object of these is to reward visible progress in manufacture by medals and other marks of approbation. It has been thought advisable to allow considerable intervals to elapse between these exhibitions, of which only two have already taken place, one in 1822, and the other in 1827. In the provinces a jury decides upon the admission of specimens, which are sent to Berlin at the expense of the state. The admittance-money at the door of the exhibition is five silber-groschen (about 6d. English) for each person; and of the money thus received, and the expenditure, a public account is kept, and the profits are distributed, either among the provincial schools, or awarded to the individual exhibitors; the division being made according to the proportion in which the provinces may have distinguished themselves. I cannot help here expressing my conviction, that were an annual exhibition of this kind held in London, it would, after a few trials, provide a fund which would not only relieve the state from the necessity of supporting the central school, but would be sufficient to defray the expenses of elementary schools in provincial towns. If it be considered that an exhibition of this kind would embrace the display of every kind of art which is now excluded from the ordinary exhibitions of works of painting, sculpture, and architecture, it must be obvious that under proper management it might be made to possess sufficient interest to attract, to an unlimited extent, public admiration and support.

In conclusion, I have to state, that besides the schools expressly for the study of art, in all gymnasia, higher schools of citizens, normal schools, in most of the schools in towns, and in the better elementary schools in the country, the principles and practice of design are taught as an ordinary branch of public instruction, and that in the universities there are chairs of the History of Art.

POLYTECHNIC SCHOOLS IN BAVARIA.

Bavaria.

At the present time, there are in Bavaria only three polytechnic schools, viz. at Munich, Nuremberg, and Augsburg; the first attending chiefly to architecture, and works of industry on which fine art has a more immediate bearing; the second, to casting and working in metal, wood-carving, &c.; and the third, to the manufacture of wool and cotton, and to dyeing and calico printing.

Exhibitions.

The expenses of these three schools are charged directly on the budget, which gives the sum of 27,000*fl.* to be divided according to a certain rate among the three.

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

Bavaria.

Besides this, a sum is derived from voluntary contributions of the corporations, and from fees paid by occasional students.

Any town is at liberty to found a complete or incomplete polytechnic school, which will be placed on the same footing in the privileges afforded to the students as the Government ones, provided there be already in the place an industrial and agricultural school of the 1st (complete) class, the success of which has been previously established.

SCHOOLS IN BAVARIA.

A remarkable difference exists between the polytechnic schools of Bavaria and the Gewerb Institut of Berlin in this respect, that though they form part of a system of public instruction even more exactly defined than the Prussian, the teachers are expressly prohibited from allowing the maintenance of the system to stand in the way where the exigencies of industry seem to require either a more limited or a more extended application of their efforts. I have already mentioned that the school at Munich is intended to bear chiefly on such branches of industry as are immediately connected with the fine arts, the school of Nuremberg on metal casting, and that of Augsburg on calico-printing. Circumstances did not permit me to visit Augsburg, but the proofs I witnessed at Munich and Nuremberg of the efficiency of the schools, hold out the utmost encouragement, and give the best hopes of success to the establishment which in this country has lately been founded through your foresight and exertions.

Nuremberg.

The circumstances in which the school of Nuremberg is placed rendered it peculiarly interesting in relation to the objects of my inquiry. The town itself is a perfect mine of monuments of industrial art, the productions of a race of celebrated artificers, remarkable for having combined in their own persons the artist and the mechanic. In no place does there appear so widely spread the influence of taste. Not only in works, the costliness of which might have admitted of the employment of artists to furnish the designs; but in the most ordinary productions of handicraft, the love and knowledge of art manifest themselves. The character of these remains has influenced in a twofold way the operations of the school. First, by exciting among the students a lively emulation of the skill of the ancient industrial artists, and an ambition to become celebrated in the same semi-artistical line. They have affected also the progress of the school in another way, which, it seems to me, involves a principle of much more importance than in this country it is generally esteemed. The great mass of ornamental art in Nuremberg, is of one kind in point of style; viz. that practised by Albert Dürer and his numerous followers: in other words, the students have continually before their eyes an exuberance of ornamental work in one particular style. Before the school commenced its operations, this vast storehouse of beauty was passed unheeded, but as soon as the education of the eye and hand had taken effect, and the students began to be sensible of the merits of ancient Nuremberg art, the commanding genius of Dürer overpowered the efforts of the director of the school to introduce the antique taste; and now, where we have one article of manufacture designed in the classical style, we have ten in the Gothic, or rather in the peculiar manner which owes its origin chiefly to Dürer, and is known by his name.

Exhibitions.

Nothing can certainly establish more palpably the value of exhibitions of art and industry, or their power of giving a bias to the taste or talent of educated artisans, than the circumstance I have alluded to above. I do not inquire whether the character of the works of the Dürer school be good or bad; it is sufficient to have noticed, that the constant exhibition of one kind of art, accompanied with education, is proved at Nuremberg to have given rise to a taste for it; and that, if this be true, it may safely be set down as a rule, that one of the not least important auxiliaries in accomplishing the good proposed by schools of design, is the affording to artisans ample means of becoming familiar with the best productions of industry, ancient and modern.

The school of Nuremberg existed some years as a private school, before it was reorganised, and taken under the care of government. It was, at the outset, the project of some individuals who proposed to afford gratuitous instruction in design to artisans. After the experience of some time, however, it was found that a mere drawing or modelling school was not an adequate means of acting on some of the manufactures practised in the town. A metal worker, for in-

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

stance, who was only taught modelling, appeared still to want a link to connect the instructions he received with his craft; and it did not seem that any definite good was done either in this or similar cases. It was then agreed to establish a workshop for the school, in which the actual processes of various manufactures should be performed by the students; and arrangements were in progress for this purpose, when the edict of the King for the organisation of a system of public instruction was issued, and the school was placed in the polytechnic grade, and enlarged accordingly. The building in which the school is carried on contains also the elementary schools, and the gymnasia; so that a pupil may pass directly from this admirable set of schools to the University. Last year 1838, the whole number of pupils in the three grades was 1,338, viz.:

In the elementary schools	- - -	415 pupils.
Mechanics' holiday school	- - -	799
Agricultural and industrial	- - -	106
Polytechnic school	- - -	18
		<hr/> 1,338

In the mechanics' holiday school of Nuremberg the branches of instruction are:—

1. Drawing.
2. Modelling in wax and clay.
3. Engraving on steel, copper, and wood.
4. Moulding plaster and clay.
5. Casting, chiseling, and chasing metal.

The whole establishment is under the superintendence of two directors and 23 professors and masters.

FRANCE.

CONCLUSIONS TO BE DRAWN FROM FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

I now come to examine whether the information which it has been in my power to obtain affords any satisfactory reply to the inquiry which formed the immediate business of my mission. Do the foreign schools, either singly, present a model which it might be safe to follow in organising the Government one at Somerset House; or collectively, do they exhibit any common character or principle which would seem to determine the precise character of the instruction which is required for the education of designers for manufacture?

Putting the matter in the former light, it does not appear that there is any one of the establishments I have visited that exactly answers to the proposed nature of the school lately founded under your auspices; the Prussian and German schools being, on the one hand, more extended, and the French, on the other, more limited in their purposes, than is consistent with the objects you have in view.

But if the inquiry be regarding the principle on which the study of design for industry ought to be conducted, all the schools seem to me to offer the same testimony. If the school of Lyons, such as I have described it, were supposed to bring within its scope the whole circle of manufactures, instead of confining itself merely to the improvement of fabrics of silk, and to employ means of instruction in design for industry generally, on the same principle as it now acts upon in reference to silk manufacture, its plan would be absolutely identical with that of the Prussian and Bavarian schools, supposing these latter to be stripped of the branches of study which have no immediate bearing on design.

Thus in the school of Lyons we have,—

- 1st. The general study of design.
- 2d. The study of the process, and reproductive capabilities of the manufacture to which design is to be applied; and
- 3d. The study of the particular species of art rendered necessary by the conditions which these impose upon the artist.

It is obvious that, however extended the purpose of the school may be, these three branches of study must, in some shape or other, be brought into operation: the same principle of instruction must be maintained. How, in truth, can it be otherwise? It is not intended to teach simply the arts of design, (for then it

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

France.
—
Proper
system of
instruction.

would be a mere drawing-school, convertible to any use to which that kind of study is applicable,) nor is it to exhibit the processes of manufacture, but it looks to a third something, constituted out of both. *The art to be learned is not that of producing an abstract kind of decoration adapted to no particular purpose, or an eternal ringing of the changes on the few ornaments of Greek architecture, but the best mode of designing patterns suited expressly to particular fabrics or manufactures. Design and manufacture are the elements which are to be brought together; they must, therefore, equally form matter of study in the school. On the one hand, the study of art is necessary, because this is the remedy which is to be applied to bad taste in manufacture; on the other, the study of manufacture is not less so, because without this how is it possible to know in what way the remedy is applicable?*

Now, of the modes of reproduction in manufacture there are two kinds: first, that which is effected by means purely mechanical; and secondly, that which depends on a certain amount of artistical skill in the workman. Under the first class may be ranged all kinds of textile fabrics, block printing, casting in metal, &c.; under the second, house decoration, engraving, carving in wood, metal cutting and chasing, &c. &c. In the preparation of designs for the branches comprehended under the second class, no practical difficulties occur; the fancy of the inventor is not fettered by any restrictions imposed by the mere process of reproduction. If the power and knowledge of the workman be adequate, any design may be reproduced, because it is a mere reproduction in the same kind. Thus all patterns for painted work are themselves painted; and all designs for solid work are themselves produced in some solid material.*

But with respect to design for most of the former class of manufactures, the case is very different; in these two points must be considered—first, the mere capability of the fabric or process in respect to design; and secondly, the nature of the process. Thus it appears that silk weaving, from the tenuity of the threads, is capable of imitating, with the utmost accuracy, any kind of pictorial effect, at least in theory it is so; but in practice this is impeded by the prodigious difficulty of the *mise en carte*, that is, of putting on paper the arrangement of the threads by which the effect is to be produced.† In this, therefore, the artist has chiefly to make himself master of the process; on the other hand, such operations as calico printing and paper staining are, from their very nature, incapable of reproducing pictorial effect, and require accordingly a conventional species of design equally adapted to their powers and mode of reproduction. To make this design workable, therefore, the artist for these branches must first know what can be executed, and secondly, how, with the limited means at his command, and consistently with considerations of expense, &c., he may produce the best effect.

From what I have said, it will appear that the classes who directly derive benefit from the instructions of a school of design for industry are, first, designers, strictly so called; and secondly, workmen whose productions are the result of a certain amount of taste and artistical powers. To mere mechanics, by which term I mean those who either produce by machinery, or who accomplish their works irrespective of any taste on their parts, the study of art can afford no direct assistance.‡

* It is but just to explain that though I have ranked engravers in one sense among the reproductive workmen, yet as they reproduce in a different kind, and the transfer they make from the coloured effect of a picture to the mere black and white of a print, requires a high degree of talent and knowledge, they must be placed in another sense on the same level with the inventors of the works which they copy.

† I have already mentioned that this almost insuperable difficulty has given way before the consummate art of the Lyonnese *metteurs en carte* and weavers, who have executed by the Jacquard machine copies of pictures in the Musée with the utmost fidelity.

‡ I allude to this not only because there are many who confound the purpose of a school of design for industry with that of a mere drawing-school for artisans, but because some time since an ignorant clamour was raised on behalf of the operative weavers of Spitalfields, who it was supposed would be benefited and the silk manufacture improved, were drawing schools established among them. In a moral point of view it would, no doubt, be very desirable to direct them to the pure pleasures which have their source in the love of art; but we might as well think of teaching design to the Jacquard machine for the improvement of its taste in weaving, as to the weaver who sets it in motion. Everything that relates to design must have been prepared before the weaver puts his hand to the work; so completely mechanical, indeed, is his part of the matter, that it appears that steam power has been in one case lately substituted for hand labour in the working of the Jacquard machine.

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

In the matter of education the foreign schools of design deal with the first class, viz., artists or designers, *i.e.* inventors, as if they were to become workmen, and with the workmen as if they intended to be artists; the designer is brought down to the level of the workman by the practical study of industry, and the workman is elevated to the level of the artist by the study of art. When the process of reproduction is purely mechanical, the province of the designer extends to the very verge of the process; when artistical, the power and knowledge of the workman ought to come up to that of the author of the design. ~

France.

Foreign
Schools of
Design.

To effect this, we find in all the schools an apartment for the practical study of industry, which is termed in the Prussian and Bavarian the *werkstadt*, and in the French the *atelier*; and I confess I do not see how the government school can answer all the ends for which it has been established without the help of a department of instruction of this kind. In recommending, however, the provision of apparatus for the study of manufacture as quite indispensable, I must not be supposed to contemplate anything like the extent of that employed in the German schools. In these the purpose is to teach the practice of mechanics generally, and the history of machinery, whether with or without a reference to design; but in the government school it is in the latter relation only that the study of industrial processes must, in my estimation, form part of the exercises. The processes, it is true, are few in number which present any difficulty to a designer; but it happens that the very manufactures to which the school is intended especially to apply are the most complicated of any; *I mean the silk manufacture and calico printing, with which I am sure I am warranted in saying, that it is utterly impossible to become familiar otherwise than by practice.*

The necessity of practical study of this kind is so obvious, that I should not have alluded to it, but that its utility had in some quarters been called in question. But I think a sufficient answer to any doubts that may be entertained on the subject is to state the fact that every European school has found this mode of study indispensable. In the school (the oldest in Europe next to the French) established by the Board of Commissioners for Scottish manufactures, the same system has for many years been acted upon with reference to the shawl and carpet manufacture, with the best results; and in the Austrian schools, I have been informed, that a similar plan is followed. It cannot be otherwise. If it be true, as I have affirmed, in speaking of the silk manufacture of Lyons, that the ultimatum of a designer's occupation is the production of his inventions in the fabric, and not merely on paper,—if the same relation holds between the designer and the fabric as there is between the sculptor and the statue in marble (to which he sometimes scarcely puts his hand), or between the architect and the building,—*it is quite incontrovertible that the designer must, in the preparation of his pattern, take practically into consideration every condition under which his pattern is to be reproduced, with the same minuteness as a sculptor is forced to consider the quality, strength, weight, &c., of marble; or the architect the innumerable matters on which the practicability of his design depends.* The provision of apparatus, however, for the studies of this department need not be looked upon as a formidable undertaking, since, as I have stated, the silk and calico manufactures are the only ones which it is quite necessary to provide for, and these are the types of every species of weaving and of printing.

Conditions
of manu-
facture.

On the elementary part of the studies, it does not seem necessary to say much. In the foregoing account of the German and French schools, it will have been observed, that though the order of study is different, its elements and materials are identical. In all the French schools, with the exception of the *Ecole Gratuite* of Paris, the human figure is the first object of study. In the German, the pupils commence with the elements of ornament, and proceed to the figure as the terminating point. Between these, the *Ecole Gratuite* holds a middle course, and conducts the study of ornament, the human figure, animals, and flowers on alternate days. To the system of the majority of the French schools I have already stated my objection, which is, that in many cases a loss of time is occasioned by the obligation it lays the pupils under of applying themselves to a study which can be of no direct service to them. The method of the *Ecole Gratuite* seems also to be inadvisable, since, according to it, the pupils are only allowed to engage in drawing the figure, or in any of their other studies, on six

Elementary
studies.

France.

days every month, by which their progress must be slow. On the whole, therefore, the German arrangement appears to be the best considered. *By making the previous study of ornament the condition of admission to the classes of the human figure, a school is made to retain its proper place, and to operate as it is intended, in the capacity of a nursery for industrial design, rather than as an elementary academy for artists, to which, in the absence of proper restrictions, it may be perverted.*

Human figure.

There is another point of view, in which the imposing this kind of condition of access to the school of the human figure may be looked upon as peculiarly applicable to this country. The neglect of the accurate and intelligent study of ornament among our professors of fine art, has absolutely expelled from this country the practice of one of its most charming branches, or left it in the hands of house painters, whose education has been too imperfect, or whose acquaintance with the productions of the ancient masters in that kind too limited to supply deficiencies of artists of the higher class. I mean arabesque painting. Now, supposing a student of the school of design to possess such talent as to warrant his ultimately devoting it to the practice of fine art, the arrangement I have ventured to recommend would ensure his having undergone such a course of study as, in his after employment, would fit him to design, to superintend, or to execute works of the kind I allude to, and tend to raise the character of national art which in this branch is at its lowest ebb. Nor is there anything inconsistent with the intention of the school of design, in supposing the probability of its being resorted to by pupils who either have no definite purpose in view, or who intend to become artists in the higher sense. It was at the outset, I understand, proposed, that considerable proficiency in drawing, &c., should be required to qualify a student for admission to the Government school; in other words, the school was not to be an elementary one. But there are many reasons why this resolution should be abandoned, and the institution thrown open without restriction to all who wish to avail themselves of the benefits of its tuition.

Operation of foreign schools.

We shall, indeed, take a very narrow view of the operation of the foreign schools, if we suppose their influence on manufacture to be due solely to that part of their organization which has an immediate bearing on industry; or that, by making the Government school more perfect in that respect than the continental establishments, any approach to the amount of good effected by the latter will be made, without the same liberal employment of the collateral aids of elementary instruction, and other means of cultivating popular taste. In matters of taste, it is no otherwise than in commerce; the production must always depend upon and bear an exact proportion to the consumption; it is, therefore, not less necessary to create the demand for tasteful design in industry than it is to provide for its exercise. The more expensive articles of commerce will always find purchasers, so long as wealth and its concomitant advantages of education and cultivated taste exist; but it is not among the wealthy, or in the more costly productions of industry, but among the less opulent classes of the community, and in the every day supplies and consumption of the market, that the real character of national taste is discernible; and the standard of this, as it appears to me, can only be raised by informing the minds of those who are to become the purchasers, as well as cultivating the talents of those who are to supply the things purchased. Every one admits, that the great evidence, which we find in France, of the knowledge and love of art in the cheaper kinds of manufacture, is due to the ample opportunities of study provided for the common people. For myself, I do not hesitate to state, as the conviction forced upon me by the inquiries I have made, that in those opportunities, embracing the innumerable elementary schools, public exhibitions, and other gratuitous means of fostering taste, the secret of the influence of the schools of design, properly so called, is to be found, and not in the completeness of their system of tuition; and that if we wish the Government school to prosper, the ground must be broken for it, otherwise it cannot, in the nature of things, take root, or bring forth any fruit.

Elementary schools, public exhibitions.

But in saying this I have been proposing rather the expediency of opening a number of elementary schools in connexion with the central establishment, than showing the necessity of making the latter serve as one of the former over and above its immediate purpose of teaching design for industry. To prove this necessity requires few words. In the first place, the studies of an elementary school must be undergone by pupils who are to become designers for industry; and in the present state of things it may be asked, where are the means of engaging

INSTRUCTION IN ART IN FOREIGN SCHOOLS.

in these studies to be found? Why, nowhere. There is at present no elementary school suited to the wants of a designer for industry; and, if this be the case, the pupils must either come to the Government school ill prepared for the practice of pattern drawing, or they must make up their deficiencies by elementary study.

But secondly, *the business of a school of design is not solely to educate designers of original works.* In many branches of industry the exercise of invention is not required, though the study of design, and an acquaintance with an appreciation of the beauties of the inventions of others is extremely desirable and advantageous. Carpenters, plasterers, cabinet-makers, require merely for their pursuits to be familiar with the established forms of architectural mouldings, and their proper decorations; lithographic draftsmen, or engravers, to possess the power of drawing correctly the various objects which they are called upon to reproduce from the works of others, by their respective processes of industry; bookbinders, to learn the rules of good taste, in combining the separate ornaments of gilding tools; and so on of many other cases which might be mentioned, in which no exercise of inventive talent is demanded, but to which a cultivated taste forms an invaluable aid. It is evident, that such as these would not have occasion to go through more than the elementary section of the studies; but if there must, for the sake of students of this grade, be an elementary class, why should access to it be denied to the general student of art, or the means at the command of the school not be turned to the best account?

France.

LOANED FROM
THE LIBRARY OF THE
BOSTON PUBLIC LIBRARY
1881

LONDON:
Printed by GEORGE E. EYRE and WILLIAM SPOTTISWOODE,
Printers to the Queen's most Excellent Majesty.
For Her Majesty's Stationery Office.

1853.

38041800134377

27.296